

This Week In Agriculture

June 1, 2006

June 2006

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Upcoming events

June 1-2: NW Weed Awareness Summit. Doubletree Riverside, Boise. Contact Roger Batt at 888-0988 for more information.

June 15-16: Ag in the Classroom workshop. Hampton Inn, Meridian. Call Rick Waitley at 888-0988 for more information.

June 20: UI Kimberly Weed Tour. Contact Don Morishita at 736-3616 for more information.

ISDA Animal Industries Division welcomes new employees Dawn Schooley and Cody Burlile. The Soil Conservation Commission welcomes Ben Evans.

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Risch, Johanns sign CREP agreement

Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns has announced a \$258 million Idaho Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) agreement to reduce irrigation water consumption, improve water quality and fish and wildlife habitat in Idaho's Snake River.

"The Idaho CREP's goals of conserving water and reducing contaminants highlights President Bush's commitment to conservation," said Johanns. "By establishing native grassland habitat, participants will increase wildlife populations and groundwater quality, while reducing irrigation. I strongly encourage Idaho farmers and ranchers to participate in this important conservation program that protects our environment."

"This is a winning agreement for all of Idaho," said Idaho Governor Jim Risch. "The agreement benefits our agriculture community and protects the environment. After extensive research, we have determined that this unique state-federal partnership will result in better water flows for spring users, improved water quality for everyone and an in-



**Governor
Jim Risch**

crease in wildlife habitat. At the same time, this agreement will protect the income streams of our rural communities that depend on agriculture to drive

the economy." Enrolling up to 100,000 acres of irrigated cropland in the Idaho Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer CREP is projected to reduce irrigation water use by up to 200,000 acre-feet annually.

The CREP will improve the Snake River's water quality and flow by increasing groundwater levels and reduce the application of agricultural chemicals and sediments. Establishing permanent vegetative cover will provide habitat for many wildlife species.

The Eastern Snake

River Aquifer CREP Project area of eastern Idaho includes all or parts of the following counties: Ada, Bingham, Blaine, Butte, Camas, Cassia, Clark, Custer, Elmore, Fremont, Gooding, Jefferson, Jerome, Lemhi, Lincoln, Madison, Minidoka, Owyhee, and Twin Falls.

In addition, all or parts of Bannock, Bonneville and Power counties will be eligible if the total CRP enrollment drops below 25 percent of the County's total cropland before the CREP project reaches the 100,000 acre enrollment target.

CREP sign-up began May 30, 2006, and continues until enrollment goals are met, or through Dec. 31, 2007, whichever comes first.

Land enrolled in the program will remain under contract for 14 to 15 years, as specified in the contract.

It is estimated that the Idaho Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer CREP's total cost over a 15-year period will be \$258 million.

CREP is a federal-state cooperative conservation program that addresses targeted agricultural-related environmental concerns.

Senate passes immigration reform measure

The Senate has approved an immigration measure by a vote of 62-26. Senator Larry Craig (R-Idaho) praised passage of S.2611, the "Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2006." The bill includes the provisions of Craig's AgJOBS legislation, which addresses the agriculture industry's need for a stable, secure, legal workforce.

"Is this bill perfect? No," Craig said. "But it realistically addresses the immigration challenges facing America today by delivering in each of the three critical areas of reform: better border security, increased internal enforcement, and visa reform. Without all three, reform is meaningless, because it will be incomplete and ineffective."

News reports indicate that conference between the House and Senate could be a long and difficult one.

The House bill provides measures for border security and does not contain the AgJOBS legislation.

"As we move forward, I will encourage my fellow House and Senate negotiators to work together with American farmers and consumers in mind, and reach a compromise soon," Craig said.

Idaho Preferred garners national attention

Two national magazines recently prominently featured the Idaho Department of Agriculture's Idaho Preferred™ marketing program.

May issues of Produce Business and Progressive Grocer highlighted the success of Idaho Preferred™ and similar state marketing efforts. The articles note that state agriculture departments are successfully using branding programs to tout locally-grown products.

Idaho Preferred™ is a promotion campaign to promote the quality, diversity, and availability of the food and agricultural products grown and raised in Idaho.

"People want to buy local and support local farmers and the local economy," Idaho Preferred™ program manager Leah Clark told Produce Business writer Kristi Johnson.

Clark told Progressive Grocer writer Meg Major, "We have a wide variety of retailers involved in our program. One of the first to sign on was a seven-store local independent, Paul's Markets, which has always been proud of the fact that they promote local products. The Idaho Preferred™ program has worked out really well for them. They make great use of our logos with in-store permanent displays, as well as with our display crates for secondary displays."

Clark explained to the magazine that every week, Paul's Markets features Idaho Preferred™ products in its newspaper ads and in-store promotions.

The Progressive Grocer



article features the Idaho Preferred™ crate of food in the center of its "Local heroes" article discussing state marketing programs.



NASDA releases new pesticide manual

NASDA's Research Foundation has announced the availability of a new training manual which provides pesticide applicators with a broad range of technical information and background knowledge in a single source that is both current and concise.

The National Core Manual utilizes the latest techniques in graphic arts and is designed to facilitate the comprehension and retention of the information.

The National Core Manual was initiated under a

cooperative agreement between the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST).

The project was continued under a similar cooperative agreement with NASDA's Research Foundation.

The project was part of EPA's continuing efforts to streamline and standardize training materials with an objective of improving the level of training in pesticide related matters on a na-

tional basis. This is part of a larger effort to minimize exposure, and thus, the potential risks associated with pesticides utilizing a strong, consistent educational and outreach approach.

It is anticipated that the National Core Manual, which covers a broad range of topics of general importance to all pesticide applicators, will be followed with sector specific manuals directed toward targeted areas such as aerial applicators, greenhouse and nursery applicators, and others.